

Hello, my name is Ian Barron, and I am a lifelong Connecticut resident and gun owner. I am writing to you today to voice my opposition to the following bills.

To begin with, HB06667 is a reintroduction of Governor Lamont's proposed assault weapon ban and other gun control measures which failed at the committee level last year. The state of Connecticut already has two assault weapon bans on the books, and the scientific literature on the effectiveness of these is lacking. The only function of these laws is to restrict cosmetic features that have no impact on the firearm in question; a Mini14 and an AR15 are functionally identical in terms of ballistic performance, and yet an AR15 is deemed as a banned assault weapon, while a Mini14, without a 'flash suppressor' is perfectly fine to own. Similarly, the features banned - such as a 'flash suppressor', 'barrel shroud', and so forth have no impact on the performance of the gun. 'Flash suppressors' reduce the muzzle flash from a firearm, whereas a barrel shroud prevents a shooter from badly burning their hands - these are safety features. With respect to so-called assault pistols, threaded barrels do not in any way make a firearm more dangerous; they merely allow the attachment of accessories, such as brakes or suppressors to the pistol. Suppressors themselves are subject to ATF approval under the NFA and like all firearms on the NFA registry are seldom if ever used in crimes. More pointedly, in light of the Bruen ruling handed down by the Supreme Court this past summer and the several successful lawsuits against assault weapon bans in other localities and states, this bill is an exercise in futility; the state will likely lose in court as these regulations, as well as those already codified, do not pass Bruen's historic and traditional test for regulating firearms. I therefore urge the legislature, both on the lack of merits of this bill as well as its dubious future should it be passed, to reject it.

With respect to HB06834, I oppose any increase in sentencing severity for non-violent offenders as it will be ineffective and used in a targeting manner. All too often these laws end up targeting the most vulnerable groups, and turning the carceral system into a revolving door. Likewise, as made apparent in my opposition to HB06667, furthering punishments based on features alone is punitive and unnecessary, as well as likely to fail in court due to Bruen and the current judicial landscape. I therefore urge the legislature to only adopt this for explicitly violent offenses, or otherwise reject it.

With respect to HB06816, I am fully opposed as it is both impractical and ineffective. Microstamping technology does not exist, and other states that have adopted similar laws have abandoned them, or had the adoption backfire and manufacturers abandon any efforts at developing microstamping. The function of a cartridge, whereby the primer is struck by the firing pin, makes microstamping infeasible. The impact upon the primer is not able to leave a significantly identifiable mark on the primer such that it could be traced back to a specific gun. Furthermore, removing the microstamp, should the technology ever actually manifest, would be as simple as lightly filing your firing pin or otherwise replacing it with a non-microstamped pin. Unless the intention is to also ban revolvers, brass catchers, or simply collecting ones' brass, there is no guarantee that microstamping - if it should ever actually become a real technology - would be effective at identifying criminals. This bill would ban the future possession of firearms that are otherwise in common use, making it unconstitutional, according to the judgements passed in Bruen, Heller, and MacDonald.

With respect to body armor, what actual purpose does this serve beyond being theatrics playing at actually doing something? Body armor is seldom actually involved in violent crime, and restricting its ownership likewise falls under violating the Second Amendment, as arms are traditionally considered to cover armor as well. There are multiple legitimate uses for body armor, as well; modern police armor was invented by a pizza delivery man, and in this heightened political age, vulnerable people need to be able to wear protection to protests. I therefore urge the legislature to reject this bill as an unconstitutional waste of both time and an exploration of something that does not exist.

Summarizing then, I am opposed to all three of the bills listed here on the basis of them being unnecessary and repetitive, unconstitutional, needlessly punitive, and in all likelihood doomed to failure from litigation. If the state is actually interested in decreasing violent crime, it should investigate actually empirically demonstrated causes - notably poverty, inequality, and degrading public health infrastructure - as means of reducing the human toll. Otherwise you're simply sticking a bandaid on a problem and not addressing the root cause thereof.